**Ron Williams**

# Time to cut off the tax dollars in Hameli case

If you've ever questioned society's need for gender diversity in the workplace, or the federal judiciary, the case of Dr. Ali Z. Hameli glows as a perfect example of why it's needed.

Imagine if the rulings that basically exonerated Hameli had come from male judges. This is not to suggest that either District Court Judge Sue L. Robinson or U.S. Magistrate Mary Patricia Trostle would let their sexes influence judicial responsibility. It's just refreshing that we don't have to again hear charges that the good old boy network is covering for one of its own.

Of course, the setting for this mess would have been even more politically correct had the state secretary of Health and Social Services, who made the dunderhead call to fire Hameli, been a man. I guess we can't expect a perfect world.

But there's little room for the word perfect in any chapter of this gnawing tale of stumbling stupidity, vengeance and classic bureaucratic bungling. Do I smell a made-for-TV movie here?

### A giant sucking sound

Meanwhile, tax payers hear more giant sucking sounds from the state treasury as this boondoggle slithers along.

I last visited the scene of the now declared non-crime in a column on June 15, 1995. I offer the year "1995" instead of simply "last year" so as not to confuse those who have been following this government sponsored circus since it first opened on April 7, 1994, the day Hameli was fired by H&SS Secretary Carmen Nazario and Gov. Tom Carper.

Lest anyone forget, Carper appointed Nazario, is her boss and better have damn well been in on the decision not only to fire Hameli, but to pay-off at $70,000 a pop the two whiny ex-secretaries whose tawdry tattles of sexual harassment against Hameli were found disingenuous at best and outright lies at worst by Judge Trostle.

The $140,000, which Nazario apparently decided was fair compensation for these ladies' terrible torment, was to be recouped from the Hameli household account as part of his punishment. It now looks more like Nazario's operating budget is the one that's going to take a hit when Hameli's lawyer gets done filing wrongful dismissal suits.

Hameli, of course, is not the poor soul in all of this. He made some stupid remarks and, as Trostle put it, "initiated conversations ... with a familiarity that he would have found unacceptable from them." She suggested that a suitable admonition would have been a suspension, employment probation and a few courses on workplace etiquette and acceptable behavior. Firing the 30-year medical examiner and internationally respected forensic pathologist was not among the options

Meanwhile, Nazario's budget is still pumping out Hameli's state check every two weeks, a none-too-skimpy $8,800 a month, and more than $210,000 since 1994.

Then there's the thousands of hours and dollars spent by Nazario's and the attorney general's office to defend the state for its bungling of the affair.

Even the two judges come in for some chiding. Judge Robinson now wishes she hadn't allowed Trostle to act as an independent arbitrator, or agent for the state, because now it falls to Robinson to decide whether she can overturn Trostle's ruling, as the state wants.

And Trostle's independent status as an arbitrator is under question because she heard evidence in a federal courtroom, on her federal magistrate time.

The woman Trostle suspects was the instigator who conspired with the two secretaries to keep dairies on Hameli is now the Rhode Island medical examiner. How quaint.

Gov. Carper needs to come out from behind his Teflon curtain and fix this slow-bleeding, sorry mess. Order Nazario to apologize or leave her post, give Hameli his job back (If he wants it.) and work out a mutually acceptable financial settlement with his attorney.

Enough tax money already has been poured down this sewer.

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